

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING  
BOROUGH COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING  
February 4, 2021**

West Reading Borough Council held a special meeting at Borough Hall on Thursday, February 4, 2021 with the following persons present: Council President Jack Gombach; Council Vice President Philip Wert; Council Pro-Tem Christopher Lincoln; Council Members Jennifer Bressler, Patrick Kaag, Samantha Kaag, and Ryan Lineaweaver; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Sergeant Chad Marks; Borough Manager Nicholas Imbesi; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira.

**VISITORS**      Karen Livingood, Resident                      James Rogers, Resident

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Jack Gombach called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. via Zoom, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Rogers shared information he has gathered, through Right-to-Know requests, on the status of Business Privilege Tax collections. Of the 731 Berks Earned Income Tax account numbers only 459 are current on their payments. The Borough is losing revenue on a number of long-term businesses that have been neglecting to pay their taxes. Mr. Rogers stated that he is sharing the business information he has gathered with Mrs. Madeira and offered to answer any questions that Council members might have.

Mr. Gombach thanked Mr. Rogers for his research, and noted ongoing budget constraints that brings an urgency to find missing funds such as these. Borough staff are assembling a game plan to pursue these delinquent or non-compliant accounts.

**CHIEF OF POLICE SEARCH**

Mr. Imbesi stated that he has been working with the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association to draft an advertisement for the Chief of Police position and the association is highly recommending the inclusion of a salary range within the advertisement. Discussions during a recent Personnel Committee meeting resulted in a recommendation to advertise a salary range of \$91,000 to \$100,000.

Ms. Kaag stated that Chief of Police salaries were reviewed around the County and that the previous Chief of Police, hired in 2013, began at a salary of \$89,650.

Mr. Wert noted a decision to disband the Northern Berks Regional Police Department where Maiden Creek and Ontelaunee Township are searching for a Chief of Police, as well as Wyomissing Borough.

Motion to approve the advertisement of a salary range for the Chief of Police position of \$91,000 to \$100,000. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 7-0.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **K-9 Police Vehicle** – Mr. Imbesi stated that the Township of Spring has offered to sell their used K-9 vehicle that is two years newer and has 50,000 less miles than the Borough's current K-9 vehicle, at a cost of \$5,000. There is a hood repair estimate of \$1,400 and with the removal and installment of graphics, would bring the total cost for this vehicle to \$9,560. Mr. Imbesi noted K-9 grant funds that would cover the cost of this purchase, as well as the

Borough Mechanic's approval on the condition of the vehicle, and Sergeant Phillips recommendation to approve this purchase.

Motion to approve the \$5,000 purchase price of the Township of Spring used K-9 Police Vehicle. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Rogers requested an update as to the payment status on the Lofts at Narrow property. Mr. Imbesi stated that there is nothing new to report at this time. Mr. Gombach offered to provide an update next month.

Ms. Kaag requested confirmation that the Board unanimously agrees to search for a Chief of Police externally. Mr. Gombach indicated an agreeance to pursue external as well as internal candidates for this position, and felt that a consultant would be an asset in assisting the Borough through this hiring process.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira  
Borough Secretary